

By: Representatives Fillingane, Bentz,  
Davis, Dedeaux, Holland, Lane, Lott,  
Peranich, Read, Scott, Simpson, Smith (59th),  
Walley, Weathersby, Patterson

To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 117

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE  
2 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI GOLDEN EAGLES FOOTBALL TEAM FOR  
3 THEIR EXCELLENT 2005 SEASON, AND EXTENDING BEST WISHES FOR SUCCESS  
4 IN THEIR FUTURE ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS.

5 WHEREAS, the University of Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles  
6 Football Team finished the 2005 season with a 7-5 overall record,  
7 giving USM a winning season for 12 straight years, one of only  
8 seven schools to accomplish that feat; and

9 WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles are one of only 12 teams in the  
10 nation to win seven or more games nine times in the past 10 years,  
11 and with their 5-3 record in Conference USA, are the only team in  
12 the league to finish with a winning record in the conference every  
13 year since its formation in 1996; and

14 WHEREAS, USM defeated Arkansas State 31-19 in the 2005 New  
15 Orleans Bowl at Lafayette, Louisiana, making its eighth bowl  
16 appearance in the past nine years, one of only 10 schools to have  
17 done so; and

18 WHEREAS, during this season, the Golden Eagles tied for the  
19 national lead in fumbles recovered, finished high in the national  
20 rankings for turnovers gained (6th), turnover margin (tied for  
21 7th), passes intercepted (tied for 23rd) and net punting yard  
22 average (15th), and led Conference USA in scoring defense and  
23 sacks; and

24 WHEREAS, several of the Golden Eagles accomplished feats that  
25 put them among the national leaders, with kicker Darren McCaleb  
26 ranking 4th in field goals made per game and 17th in scoring,  
27 punter Luke Johnson ranking 7th in average punting yards per game,

28 and linebacker Kevis Coley ranking 8th in total tackles, 7th in  
29 solo tackles and tied for 69th in tackles for loss; and

30 WHEREAS, within the conference, punter Luke Johnson finished  
31 1st in average punting yards per game, kicker Darren McCaleb  
32 finished 1st in field goals made per game and kick scoring, 2nd in  
33 overall scoring, 4th in field goal percentage and 5th in extra  
34 point percentage, and linebacker Kevis Coley finished 1st in total  
35 tackles and fumbles recovered, 5th in tackles for loss and tied  
36 for 7th in sacks; and

37 WHEREAS, senior quarterback Dustin Almond set single season  
38 school records for passes completed, passing attempts, passing  
39 yards and yards of total offense and was 2nd in passing  
40 touchdowns, and he set the school career record for touchdowns  
41 responsible for, finished 2nd in career yards, total offense and  
42 interception avoidance, 3rd in passing completions, passing  
43 attempts and passing efficiency, and tied for 4th in passing  
44 touchdowns; and

45 WHEREAS, kickoff returner John Eubanks ranks 1st in  
46 conference history in career yards per return, 2nd in career  
47 return yards, and tied for 2nd in career kickoff return  
48 touchdowns, and also ranks 1st in school history in career kickoff  
49 returns and 3rd in career kickoff return average, 5th in  
50 single-season kickoff return average, and 4th in kickoff return  
51 average in a game; and

52 WHEREAS, tight end Shawn Nelson finished the season with 35  
53 catches for 540 yards, an average of 15.4 yards per catch and five  
54 touchdowns, all of which are school records for a tight end; and

55 WHEREAS, three of the Golden Eagles were honored for their  
56 outstanding play by being selected for All-American honors this  
57 season, with Kevis Coley, Luke Johnson and Darren McCaleb being  
58 named as third team All-American by SI.com and as honorable  
59 mention All-American by CollegeFootballNews.com; and

60           WHEREAS, several team members received various honors for  
61 their superior season performances: linebacker Kevis Coley was  
62 named as conference Defensive Player of the Year; defensive back  
63 Brandon Sumrall was named a Sophomore All-American by  
64 CollegeFootballNews.com; tight end Shawn Nelson was named a third  
65 team Freshman All-American by The Sporting News and  
66 CollegeFootballNews.com; Kevis Coley, Trevis Coley, Luke Johnson,  
67 George Batiste and John Eubanks were named to the first team  
68 All-Conference Team; Travis Cooley, Tom Johnson, Brandon Sumrall  
69 and Darren McCaleb were named to the second team All-Conference  
70 Team; Shawn Nelson was named to the third team All-Conference Team  
71 and to the All-Freshman Team; and kicker Darren McCaleb was named  
72 a semifinalist for the Lou Groza Award, which honors the best  
73 kicker in the nation; and

74           WHEREAS, punter Luke Johnson was named a finalist for the  
75 Danny Wuerffel Trophy and the ARA Sportsmanship Award and was  
76 named the Division I male recipient of the Woody Hayes Award, all  
77 of which are awarded to the top players in the nation based on  
78 academic, athletic and community service; and

79           WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles were honored for the third year in  
80 a row by the American Football Coaches Association for producing a  
81 graduation rate of 70% or better, one of only 30 teams with such  
82 an accomplishment; and

83           WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles were superbly coached and inspired  
84 during the season by Head Coach Jeff Bower, who won his 100th  
85 career victory with the win over UAB on October 21, 2005, making  
86 him the 20th active coach in the nation to accomplish that feat;  
87 and

88           WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the  
89 accomplishments of this group of student athletes who have brought  
90 honor to their university, their community and to the State of  
91 Mississippi:

92           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
93 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
94 THEREIN, That we commend and congratulate the University of  
95 Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles Football Team for their  
96 excellent 2005 season, and we extend to them the best wishes of  
97 the Legislature for success in their future athletic and academic  
98 endeavors.

99           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
100 furnished to the University of Southern Mississippi and to members  
101 of the Capitol Press Corps.